

Park Perspective

Parks + Recreation (UC)

Community Affairs File

by Patrick Ralston,

City Parks Superintendent



The City Park featured this week is Graham Park which is located at 1401 South 17th Street. Graham Park has a whopping .96 hundredths of one acre.

Graham Park was established in 1920 by Rosanna Graham in honor of her late husband. He was a former Park Superintendent in Terre Haute who did a great deal to develop local City Parks.

In the 1926 Annual Report of the Terre Haute Park Department it was noted:

"This park has outgrown the neighborhood. It is entirely too small to accommodate the number of children in that part of the city.

Expansion is impossible without a considerable outlay of money, and this I do not think would be practical. Eventually, I believe this Board will have to consider the idea of selling the ground and seeking a larger tract south or south-east of the present location. We continue to receive many protests from the residents around the park. The people complain of the noise, lack of toilet facilities, and insist that these conditions be remedied. It is true, they have some cause for complaint, but upon investigation, I find that most of the fault is from the noise of the children having a good time.

After all, that is what our parks are for, and in the majority of cases, I silently side in with the children.

The Park was in the charge of Mr. Thomas Bruant, and he made us a good man for the place. He knows how to handle children and I think every child in the neighborhood is his friend."

It was also said in this annual report that Graham Park had a total of sixty-five trees. Today there are no more than twenty trees.

In 1937 the annual report states that a total of \$350.89 was spent on Graham Park for maintenance and security. Graham Park through the years has provided a safe place for children in the neighborhood to play as well as provide a place for adults to relax.

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REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Vigo County Public Library

The 1943 annual report had a short section devoted to the effects World War II had on small neighborhood parks. The following is a condensed version of the report.

"The war has had two distinct effects on the city park system. The thing which is extremely noteworthy is that the small parks, or rather community parks, will see a great deal of usage, due to gasoline rationing. Already we are having calls for tables in large numbers at the small parks for picnics of Church and School groups, which ordinarily went to the large park, namely Deming and many were in the habit of holding their picnics in the State Park, but now must use a park near at hand to save gasoline. This has a very fine effect on the park system in that the general public becomes acquainted with Terre Haute's own parks and in this acquaintance there is sure to be aroused an interest in better park development and undoubtedly a cooperative spirit among our citizens to help keep our parks beautiful and reduce vandalism."

Graham Park is small in size but has been a positive influence in the south end of Terre Haute for over 60 years.

Cross Country Ski rentals are now available at Dobbs Park. There are three ski trails plus many acres of open space. Please call 877-1095 for more information. Park crews have cleaned off a section of the Dobbs Lake for ice-skating. The Park will remain open until 10:00 p.m. for late evening ice skating.

Don't forget the Park and Recreation Department's Annual "Winter Carnival" to be held at Deming Park on Saturday, February 9. Activities include a snufboarding contest, snow sculpturing contest and cross country ski demonstration and 1-mile race. These will take place at the Snow Hill area at 1:00 pm. A winter softball tournament will also be held at the northeast diamond. For more information on this, contact Dick Duby at 238-9204. Refreshments will be served, so bring the whole family down to Deming Park for lots of wintertime FUN!

NOTE If there is no snow on February 9, the carnival will be rescheduled for the following Saturday, February 16.

WINTER DRIVING TIP

Slippery roads make for longer stopping distances. Maintain extra distance between you and the car in front of you.